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January 4, 1968

Editor, Evening Standard
London, ENGLAND

Sir:

Your Washington adjunct of the White House, Mr. Jeremy Campbell, reminds me of a tugboat on the Thames. It has a 10-inch whistle and a five-inch boiler. Blow the whistle and it stops dead. So it is with Mr. Campbell: Mention "Warren Report" and he stops dead, as though Lyndon Johnson rather than you paid him.

Your December 29 story by him is loosely headed, "The mind of Jim Garrison". It might more precisely read, "The Mind of Jeremy Campbell", with or without the by far largest, black display of headline type, "PSYCHO".

By U.S. standards (and I'd always, apparently erroneously, understood British standards were higher), this story is even more libelous than the one from which it was cribbed. Responsible papers, like the New York Times, did not use it because it is so patently libelous.

I invite you to make a word-by-word comparison between what Mr. Campbell signed and what the Washington Post used the same day from the Chicago Tribune press service.

What is most remarkable is Mr. Campbell's unintendedly true statement that is contrary to what has appeared in the U.S. press, that "the records (were) made available by the Pentagon". This is true, but the opposite fiction is preserved here. Otherwise, there would be a confession of criminality to compound the official libel. The Pentagon, contrary to Mr. Campbell, has announced it is investigating itself. Of course, they said "how the story was leaked", but there can be no doubt of the official nature of the "leak".

Unfortunately, Mr. Campbell finds copying the slanders of others less taxing than digging up his own. Otherwise, he might have told your readers that the first "leak" was not by the Chicago Tribune but by the lawyer for CIA-man Gordon Novel, two days earlier, on KHJ-TV in Hollywood. Mr. Jerry Weiner, who Jim Garrison has charged is in the pay of the CIA and who is one of Novel's lawyers, was the man who then used it. Novel, confirmed by Mr. Weiner, proclaims his CIA connection and has announced that should Garrison succeed in extrediting him from Ohio, where he is protected by the President's good friend, Governor Rhoads, his defense will be that he worked for the CIA. Mr. Campbell's failure to mention this is not inconsistent. Nor is it difficult to understand.

Here, however, he is inconsistent. Had he read my OSWALD IN NEW ORLEANS: CASE FOR CONSPIRACY WITH THE CIA, he'd well know the Novel-Weiner connections, with exact quotes.

But what Mr. Campbell has done is much more reprehensible than what the CIA-Pentagon-Chicago Tribune-Washington Post government claque has done. He suppressed the important parts of the story.

He did repeat the libel that Garrison was "disabled" and "unfit". What he suppressed is the subsequent, official military acknowledgment of the extent of this "unfitness": It took Garrison back into service and in a relatively short time advanced him from captain to lieutenant-colonel. One wonders just how "unfit" a man must be to qualify as an Army colonel!

Mr. Campbell retailed the quite gross slander that Garrison suffers a "chronic exhaustion" syndrome. My own personal experience confirms the disabling "exhaustion" from which Garrison suffers: On the first five days I worked with him when I testified before the New Orleans Grand Jury (much of the New Orleans evidence comes from three of my four published books on this subject), he thrice worked with me until about 2 a.m., then appeared at his office the following day at the regular hour. Two of these three days after the late-night work, we lunched at his desk, partaking only of diet preparations (Metrecal, etc.), the only contents of his office refrigerator.

This refrigerator, naturally, is the testimonial to his "disabling psychoneurosis of long duration" that "has interfered with his social and professional adjustment": It was a present from his staff!

There is equally eloquent manifestation of his "social and professional" maladjustment: The voters of New Orleans have twice elected him - just how socially maladjusted can a successful vote-getter be? - and the appeals courts certify his professional shortcomings by never once reversing a single case he has won!

By this time, you perhaps know all you need to award Mr. Campbell a suitable reward - perhaps Mr. Johnson hasn't yet gotten around to it.

His record is consistent. Rather than using original sources, he prefers the second-hand. This is like reading books rather than marrying (which in his private life he eschewed, having married a beautiful and graceful woman who is a suitable advertisement for another British export, miniskirts). And he is ever-willing to spring you to the defense of the U.S. government, whenever it is in distress.

How clearly I recall his June 29, 1966, glorification of the then-forthcoming magnus opus by William Manchester. What a remarkable prophet Mr. Campbell is! And how brilliant your editorial judgment in no publishing my quite accurate prediction of the consequences of the Manchester book!

From all of this, you can see that I marvel that the English public is at least as well, impartially, reliably and accurately informed as we in the U.S. by those newspapers which unflaggingly seek only truth, present only fact, and never cease in their quest for the essence of the viability of a democratic society, untainted news!

Please accept my heartfelt, really quite sincere, expression of the tribute that is justly yours.

Sincerely,

Harold Weisberg